
TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE....

A Column on Consumer Issues

by Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem's
Consumer Protection and Antitrust Division

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“LOSE WEIGHT AND KEEP IT OFF FOR GOOD”

If you gained a few extra pounds over the holidays, you are in good company. Millions of Americans are overweight and looking for a solution. There are a lot of reasons to lose weight – to be healthier, look better, feel better and have more energy.

Many people are persuaded to try weight loss products because the company gives a “money back guarantee” if the product does not work satisfactorily. While some dieters succeed in taking off weight with these products, most do not keep the weight off for long.

Before you pay for any weight loss products, take note: most have no scientific evidence to support their claims, and some may even be dangerous to your health. Always discuss weight loss plans with your family doctor.

Some tips to consider before you spend money on products or programs promising fast or easy weight loss are:

- **“Lose Weight While You Sleep.”** Claims for diet products and programs that promise weight loss without effort are phony.
- **“Lose 30 Pounds in Just 30 Days.”** As a rule, the faster you lose weight, the more likely you are to gain it back. Also, fast weight loss could harm your health. Claims such as this are highly exaggerated. Unless your doctor advises it, do not look for programs that promise quick weight loss.
- **“Lose All The Weight You Can For Just \$39.99.”** Some weight loss programs have hidden costs. Some do not advertise the fact that you must buy prepackaged meals that cost more than the program fees. Before signing up for any weight loss program, ask for all the costs in writing.
- **“Scientific Breakthrough ... Medical Miracle.”** There are no miracle weight loss products! To lose weight and keep it off, you have to eat less and exercise more.
- **“John Doe Lost 84 Pounds in Six Weeks.”** Do not be misled by someone else's weight loss claims. Even if the claims are true, someone else's success may have little relation to your own chances of success.

Experts agree that the only way to lose weight and keep it off is to reduce the calories you eat and burn more energy by increasing physical activity. In other words, there is no quick and easy fix!

Talk to a dietician for advice on healthy eating. Additional information on nutrition and weight loss is available through the Weight-control Information Network, 877-946-4627 or visit their web site on-line at www.niddk.nih.gov/health/nutrit/nutrit.htm. This organization provides information about weight control, obesity, and related topics to health professionals and the public.

The Attorney General's Consumer Protection Division investigates allegations of fraud in the marketplace. Investigators also mediate individual complaints against businesses. If you have a consumer problem or question, call the Consumer Protection Division at 328-3404, toll-free at 1-800-472-2600, or 1-800-366-6888 (w/TYY). This article and other consumer information is located on our website at www.ag.state.nd.us.

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